



Immigration and Customs Enforcement



United States Attorney's Office  
District of Arizona

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## **SEVEN MORE ARIZONA MEN INDICTED IN NATIONWIDE INVESTIGATION OF INTERNET CHILD PORNOGRAPHY TRADE**

TUCSON - Six Southern Arizona men have been indicted by a federal grand jury in Tucson on charges of receipt and possession of child pornography. The six, plus one additional man who faces state charges, are the latest to be charged in a nationwide investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) targeting a website that offered images and movies of hardcore child pornography. The six defendants include Antonio Neira, 24, Deverne E. Horton, 77, and Lane Pickart, 52, all residents of Oro Valley, Ariz.; as well as Dennis Torres, 26, Zachary Z. Stephenson, 20, and Christian Gudino, 24, all of Tucson, Ariz.

The seventh man charged as a result of Operation Emissary, Charles Stanton, 44, of Oro Valley, will be prosecuted by the Pima County Attorney's Office.

"The scope of this investigation and the number of arrests that have been made so far are a clear indication of ICE's resolve to search out those who use the Internet to sexually exploit innocent children," said Julie Myers, Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for ICE. "Some predators mistakenly believe that the anonymity of cyberspace shields them from scrutiny; in fact, their use of computers and the Internet have given us new tools to use in our enforcement efforts."

U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona Paul K. Charlton stated: "Child pornography is child abuse, the desecration of the human body, and the destruction of a child's soul. We are grateful to ICE, the Oro Valley Police Department, and many other local agencies across the country whose hard work has resulted in these indictments."

Federal search warrants had been issued to search the six men's computers in August 2006. In the course of the investigation, agents learned that these six defendants had purchased subscriptions to a child pornography website. The agents seized each of the defendants' personal computers and computer-related equipment. A forensic analysis of these computers and equipment revealed that they each possessed and/or received child pornography in interstate commerce.

Operation Emissary has resulted in at least 125 arrests in 22 states. In October, four other Arizona men, Lawrence Amber, 30, and David Troglin, 53, both of Kingman; Andre Rauen, 30, of Phoenix; and James Shepherd, 60, of Prescott, were arrested and charged with receipt of child pornography.

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The indictments allege that all six defendant possessed computer images depicting minors who had been sexually exploited. The indictments against defendants Gudino, Horton, Stephenson, and Pickart further allege that they had received child pornography in interstate commerce.

Oro Valley Police Chief Daniel G. Sharp stated: "This is an excellent example of cooperation between local and federal agencies to address an extremely serious and insidious crime, one that is virtually invisible to the average citizen yet poses an extreme danger to all of our youth. Hopefully, the federal indictments against these six individuals and the state charge against an additional Oro Valley resident will serve notice that these crimes will absolutely not be tolerated and will be aggressively prosecuted."

A conviction for Receipt of Child Pornography carries a mandatory minimum sentence of five years imprisonment, a maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment, and \$250,000 fine or both and the possibility of lifetime supervised release. Possession of Child Pornography carries a maximum sentence of up to 10 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine or both, and the possibility of lifetime supervised release. In determining an actual sentence, the judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Oro Valley Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by David Paul Flannigan, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBERS: CR06-1570; CR06-1878; CR06-1879; CR06-1880; CR06-1881; and CR06-1912  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-258(Operation Emissary)

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